

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN  
SAFETY & LOSS  
PREVENTION MANUAL  
April 1991**

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## **FOREWORD**

The safety and health of each employee and citizen who comes in contact with the City of Middletown property, equipment or operations are of vital concern to the City of Middletown. As employees, each of us must pursue the highest standards in our assigned job activities and responsibilities. The well being of persons involved and the protection of our physical resources is as important as the activity or work being performed. Costly mishaps detract from our objectives and functions.

We must strive to perform the tasks of government operations and public services without accidents. It is the responsibility of all City of Middletown employees to contribute to this goal.

No assignment is so critical that time cannot be taken to do it safely.

## INTRODUCTION

Far too often safety and loss prevention is limited solely to the reduction of employee injuries. Such a narrow view of safety and loss prevention can be an open invitation to financial disaster. Safety and loss prevention is a broad science that is a critical aspect of every activity in which the City of Middletown is involved.

This manual is designed to establish uniform safety and loss prevention procedures and to inform all City of Middletown employees about management policies that are the basis for the City of Middletown Safety and Loss Prevention Program.

All employees are charged with the responsibility for cooperating with and supporting the safety and loss prevention program. Every employee is expected to concern himself with his own safety, the safety of his fellow workers and the safety of the general public affected by City of Middletown operations.

**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN**  
**SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION POLICY STATEMENT**

The City of Middletown is committed to providing the safest and healthiest possible working conditions for all of its employees. To accomplish this, the City of Middletown shall comply with all current occupational safety, health and environmental laws mandated by federal, state and local jurisdictions, as well as seek voluntary compliance with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements.

The City of Middletown's goal is to decrease the number of safety and health related accidents, injuries, property damage and losses throughout the City.

The City of Middletown maintains that the best source of protection for the health and safety of the workforce is the individual employee. It is the responsibility of all employees to strictly follow all safety and health policies and procedures.

The City of Middletown is committed also to:

- \* Maintain ongoing programs to see that all employees clearly understand all facets of the Safety & Loss Prevention Program that directly affects them and their duties.
- \* Reduce, control or avoid employee exposure to all known or suspected occupational health and safety risks.
- \* Make reduction, control and elimination of risks a top priority in all plans and budgets.
- \* Establish and maintain communication with all employment levels to keep employees aware of the safety and health factors of their jobs.
- \* Provide incentive programs to encourage employees to identify, control and eliminate safety and health risks.
- \* Establish and maintain an accident and injury reporting system and a record keeping system.

- \* Recognize that the basic responsibility for employee safety and health rests with the employee.



**CITY OF MIDDLETOWN**  
**SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION COMMITTEES**

**RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The City of Middletown Risk Management Committee is responsible for performing risk management and safety reviews of employee injuries, motor vehicle accidents and property damage to achieve and maintain acceptable loss levels. Recommendations, as a result of these reviews, are submitted to the Mayor for review and recommendation.

**SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The City of Middletown Safety Committee is responsible for reviewing and discussing matters as it relates to general safety and health principles and recommend topics to be reviewed by the City of Middletown Risk Management Committee.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **DEPARTMENT**

Each department and director shall have authority and responsibility for maintaining safety and healthful working conditions within their jurisdiction. Each department must recognize that safety and loss prevention programs vary from department to department, which necessitates that each department must adopt a program appropriate to its individual activities.

Other responsibilities include:

1. Prompt reporting and investigation of all accidents, injuries or incidents that could lead to injuries or damage.
2. Preventive maintenance programs on all operating tools, equipment and vehicles shall be developed. Inspections for the specific purposes of determining potential hazards, confirming performance of preventive maintenance and safety and loss prevention program violations must be made periodically.
3. General rules and guidelines shall be developed and applied to all employees. Each department shall develop specific rules and guidelines recognizing the hazards and risks of its own department.
4. All employees, particularly new employees, must be made aware of the Safety & Loss Prevention Program and the rules by which their performance will be governed. They must be given adequate training and instruction in the safe and proper manner of performing their work. Additional job safety instructions or safety training must be given wherever hazardous conditions or materials indicate a potential for frequent or severe injuries.
5. General rules and guidelines shall be developed and applied to all employees regarding the use of proper personal protective equipment and clothing as required for various tasks being performed by employees. Required protective equipment and clothing shall be provided for employees and its use enforced at all times.

6. A record of each incident, accident or injury and a copy of the accident investigation report should be maintained within the specific departments for future reference.
7. Each department and agency shall provide for the prompt and efficient medical treatment of injured employees per the City of Middletown's Worker's Compensation Administration Procedures.
8. Each department and agency shall perform periodic statistical analysis to measure the effectiveness of their Safety & Loss Prevention Program and to determine trends of accident frequency and severity.

## **SUPERVISOR**

Supervisors will assume the responsibility of thoroughly instructing their personnel in the safe practices to be observed in their work situations. They consistently enforce safety standards and requirements to the utmost of their ability and authority. Supervisors will act positively to eliminate any potential hazards within the activities under their jurisdiction and they will set the example of good safety practice in all their endeavors. Safety records shall be measured along with other phases of supervisor performance. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that such records be complete and accurate and that all accidents be fully reported. The principal duties of supervisors in discharging responsibilities for safety area as follows:

- A. Enforce all safety regulations in effect and make employees aware that violations of safety rules will not be tolerated.
- B. Make sure all injuries are reported promptly and treated properly and all accidents are reported even if injury is not apparent.
- C. Conduct thorough investigations of all accidents and take necessary steps to prevent recurrence through employee safety education, operating procedures or modification of equipment.
- D. Provide employee with complete safety instructions regarding their duties prior to the employees' actually starting to work.

- E. Conduct regular safety checks, including a careful examination of all new and relocated equipment before it is placed in operation.
- F. Properly maintain equipment and issue instructions for the elimination of fire and safety hazards.
- G. Continuously inspect for unsafe practices and conditions and promptly undertake any necessary corrective actions.
- H. Develop and administer an effective program of good housekeeping and maintain high standards of personal and operational cleanliness throughout all operations.
- I. Provide safety equipment and protective devices for each job based on knowledge of applicable standards or on recommendation of the department head.
- J. Conduct safety briefings at organizational meetings and encourage the use of employee safety suggestions.
- K. Give full support to all safety procedures, activities and programs.

*NOTE: If the personnel situation within a department does not allow supervisors to perform these tasks, the department head is responsible.*

## **EMPLOYEE**

Each employee, as a part of the Safety & Loss Prevention Program, is expected to place safe work practices and identification of unsafe conditions at the highest priority while performing their daily tasks. Each employee's safety commitment will include, but is not limited to, the following:

- A. Using the safety equipment which has been provided for use in performing daily work assignments.
- B. Wearing the prescribed uniform and safety shoes, as required.

- C. Not operating equipment for which training or orientation has not been received.
- D. Warning co-workers of unsafe conditions or practices they are engaged in which could lead to or cause an accident.
- E. Reporting defective equipment immediately to a supervisor.
- F. Reporting dangerous or unsafe conditions that exist in the workplace as well as throughout the City. This would include defective sidewalks, broken curbs, hanging tree limbs, loose handrails, open manholes, sunken basins and sewers, missing or damaged traffic signs or signals.
- G. Reporting of all injuries and accidents regardless of severity.
- H. Protection of unsafe conditions resulting from City work that could present a hazard to the public.
- I. Taking care not to abuse tools and equipment, so that these items will be in usable condition for as long as possible as well as to ensure that they are in the best possible condition while being used.

## **GENERAL SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **SAFETY EQUIPMENT**

It is the City of Middletown's intent to provide all necessary personal protective equipment required in performing routine operations. Those items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- \* Safety shoes
- \* Rain gear
- \* Gloves
- \* Boots
- \* Protective head gear
- \* Goggles
- \* Hearing protection
- \* Visibility vests
- \* Gas monitoring devices
- \* Welding clothing and shields
- \* Breathing apparatus
- \* Protective clothing
- \* Life preservers

Requests for equipment not immediately available should be directed to the immediate responsible supervisor. Failure to use available and required personal protection equipment is the employee's responsibility.

### **USE OF HARD HATS**

Hard hats should be worn by City of Middletown employees when involved in the following situations:

1. When present, for any reason, on construction sites where hard hats signs are posted;
2. All water, sewer, street and construction operations where work is being done with lifting equipment; underground level where people

are working above other workers; or where other potentials of head injury exists;

3. All forestry operations;
4. Park Department operations similar to that of #2 above;
5. Any task by any City of Middletown employee where a potential for head injury exists;
6. In locations damaged by disaster, fire, flood, or other cause, which result in structural damage or falling material;
7. Persons working near high voltage electrical hazards; and
8. All supervisors involved in the above types of work.

## **PURCHASING PROCEDURES AND SAFETY**

The Risk Manager must make sure that equipment, commodities and services that are purchased for use by City employees conform to industry standards as well as Federal, State and local codes and manufacturing requirements.

A great deal of responsibility can be transferred to manufacturers and distributors of supplies and equipment used to protect employees from the risk related to use of such supplies and equipment. For this reason, the following general statement may be used in the standard purchasing documents for all purchases under contract:

"The equipment you would supply to the City of Middletown must comply with all requirements and standards as specified by the federal government's Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1971. All guards and protectors as well as appropriate markings will be in place before delivery. Items not meeting OSHA specifications will be refused. Supplier may be required at his expense to provide training to City employees in the operation of this item, and its maintenance at the convenience of the City of Middletown."

Specialized equipment usually is constructed with components that are designed, built or tested to standards prepared by Underwriters Laboratories (UL), American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME), or American National Standards Institute (ANSI) to name a few. It is simple to determine if certification is present and if so, such specification requirements will serve to reaffirm not only the commitment to safety of the employees, but the usable life of the equipment as well as its appropriateness for the job.

## **CONTRACT SPECIFICATIONS**

Procedurally, contract specifications should be reviewed by the Risk Manager to ensure compliance with all safety, insurance as well as procedural inclusions that affect employees and public liability.

## **OPERATIONS IN THE PUBLIC WAY**

Whenever operations are taking place in streets, parkways, sidewalks or other places where citizens as well as employees may be endangered, the supervisor or crew leader on the worksite is as responsible for the safety of the public in this type of operation as for getting the job done. The supervisor must spend ample time before, during and after the work to protect employees and the public from the hazards created by this work. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. If street construction or repair work is to be done, preparations will be made to assure vehicle and pedestrian safety before such work is allowed to begin.
2. If traffic is affected by the operation, proper signing must be used to warn in advance of the work area and traffic control signs in and around the affected area are to be correctly placed and maintained through the period when work is being performed and traffic obstructions exist.
3. Where barricades and signs are used overnight, supervisors will examine the work area for proper placement at the end of the workday.
4. Lighted barricades will be used whenever possible for overnight protection.



5. Where traffic must be periodically stopped or obstructed by workers or equipment in the traveled portion of a roadway, a flagman wearing a protective vest will be stationed.
6. All workers in or near the roadway will wear reflective vests or cross straps on their clothing while at the worksite.
7. Flagmen will be used to slow or direct traffic where the approach to the work area does not provide adequate visibility to drivers.
8. All plates used to cover holes in the street on a temporary basis are to be "spiked" in place.
9. In any case where streets are significantly obstructed or closed for any period of time, the police department and fire department will be notified of the situation and told approximately how long the closure will be in effect.

#### **Pedestrian Safety**

1. When pedestrian traffic is impeded by official City barricades, restrictive tape, rope or other restraint will be used to keep the public from the worksite.
2. If pedestrian traffic must be routed off sidewalks and into the street, protection will be provided by cones, barricades and signs, to guard from vehicular traffic.
3. Holes in the sidewalk or streets which must be left open will be covered whenever possible along with perimeter protection. Every possible means of preventing accidental entry into the hole should be used. Keep in mind that darkness and snow can complicate this situation.
4. Where an unusual situation exists that cannot be easily resolved, or when personal injury or damage to equipment or property occurs as a result of operations, contact the responsible supervisor immediately.

## OFFICE SAFETY

Office work is more dangerous than is commonly supposed and many accidents occur during ordinary office routine.

1. Every employee shall be responsible to see that his own desk and work area is clean and orderly. Pick up items such as pencils or paper clips that are strewn around. Good housekeeping is the key to a safe office environment.
2. Keep an eye open for loose or threadbare floor coverings.
3. Be extra cautious when you come up to a door that can be opened in your direction. Take it easy when pushing open such a door and slow when coming to a "blind" corner.
4. Haste when walking between desks can result in bruises and falls. Keep electrical cords out of aiseways.
5. All file, desk and table drawers shall be kept closed when not in use. As soon as you leave them, close them. Never open more than one file drawer at a time.
6. Overloading the top drawer of unsecured file cabinets has caused many an injury. If unfamiliar with file cabinets, test the drawers and be careful not to pull them out to full extension. There may be no locking device on inexpensive or older models.
7. Office tables, desks and chairs must be maintained in good condition and free from sharp corners, projecting edges, wobbly legs, etc.
8. Tilting chairs can be hazardous when improperly used and care should be taken to assure that they are in good working condition.
9. Never use chairs, desks or other office furniture as a makeshift ladder. Always use a step ladder. Don't overreach and lose your balance.
10. Message spindles can all too frequently cause puncture wounds to hands and arms. When used, the point shall be protected by a suitable bound cover or,

preferably, the point shall be bent to a horizontal angle.

11. Keep the blades of paper cutters closed when not in use.
12. Scissors, paper cutters and similar office devices can easily cause minor, but painful injuries. Report such injuries at once and take precautions to avoid infection.
13. Keep your hands clear of electric typewriter carriages.
14. Paper can cut and it hurts. Use a sponge or other wetting devices for envelopes. Use rubber finger guards when working with stacks of paper.
15. Keep paper clips, thumb tacks and pins in a place where they can't injure you. Keep razor blades and "exacto" blades covered. Even a little scratch can get infected.
16. Be sure all electrical equipment is grounded and the cord is in good condition. If a machine gives you a shock or starts smoking, unplug it and report the defective device immediately to your supervisor.

## **LADDERS AND SCAFFOLDING**

Mishaps involving electricity and falls from high places result in the two most critical types of injuries involving ladders and scaffolding. Other hazards include: splinters, slivers and slips that can cause sprains, strains, bruises and abrasions.

The following safety procedures will prevent accidents and possible injury:

### **Ladders**

1. Metal ladders shall not be used in the vicinity of electrical circuits.
2. Periodically inspect wooden ladders. They shrink over a period of time. In a stepladder, this may cause steps or back bar members to become loose. Hold the rods beneath the steps with a pliers and tighten the nut at the end with a wrench to maintain strength and keep the ladder steady.

3. Wooden ladders or scaffold planks should not be painted because defects may be covered up. Use a good grade of spar varnish or a mixture of linseed oil and turpentine to preserve the wood.
4. Nonskid feet should be used on all straight and extension ladders.
5. When properly placed, the feet of the ladder should be about one-fourth as long as the vertical (i.e., if the ladder is leaned against a wall eight feet high, the feet should be set two feet from the wall). Ladders should never be placed against window sashes.
6. When using a straight ladder, it should be long enough to extend at least three rungs above the level to which the user is climbing. Stepladders must not be used in lieu of straight ladders. They are not designed for this purpose.
7. If the feet of a straight ladder are to rest on an unsecured surface, secure the ladder in position by the use of hooks, ropes, spikes, cleats or other anti-slip devices or by stationing an employee at the base of the ladder to hold it in position during use.
8. Never stand on the top step of a step ladder.
9. Only one person shall be on a ladder at a time.
10. Never carry articles in hand while climbing. Use a hand line to raise and lower tools and materials or suspend them suitably in a tool belt.
11. Always face a ladder when ascending or descending and always use both hands.
12. Clean muddy or slippery shoes before beginning to climb the ladder.
13. Keep rungs clean and free of grease, oil, and caked-on dirt.
14. If it is necessary to place a ladder near a door or where there is potential foot traffic, set up warning signals or take other precautions to prevent accidental contact that might upset the ladder.

## **Scaffolding**

1. Proper supervision is required to erect scaffolding.
2. Planks and other material used in building scaffolding must be sound and free from knots. Keep planks in good condition with a spar varnish. Never paint the planks.
3. Planking should be adequately cleaned, the scaffolding used for work over 10 feet off the ground should have toe boards, mid-rails and handrails.
4. Tools left on top of the scaffolding can easily fall to the ground and injure passerbys. Keep tools in a bucket or box lashed to the scaffolding.

## **SEASONAL AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES SAFETY AND DRIVING REQUIREMENTS**

All of the procedures and policies set forth in this manual apply to all employees of the municipality regardless of the number of hours worked. However, in order to facilitate a smooth orientation and procedural checklist, the following special considerations for seasonal and part-time employees should be noted.

1. No part-time employee will operate a City-owned motor vehicle without authorization from the Risk Manager.
2. Part-time employees hired to do heavy physical labor will receive a pre-employment physical, including spinal x-rays. The Personnel Department, in consultation with the department heads, will determine which positions will require such physical examinations.
3. All part-time employees filling laborer positions in parks, streets, sanitation, water and sewer and other departments are required to report to work wearing safety shoes. The obligation for ensuring compliance rests in the respective department in which the employee is working.
4. In addition to other orientation matters, part-time employees will receive instruction in the following areas:

- a. What to do if injured or ill on the job.
- b. Clothing requirements (including shoes).
- c. Availability of safety and protective equipment.
- d. Unauthorized operation of City vehicles or other equipment.
- e. Availability of training or instruction on unfamiliar equipment or jobs.
- f. How to report an unsafe condition or incident involving injury to a citizen or damage to private property.
- g. Riding in vehicles--- "do's" and "dont's" of riding in City vehicles of all types.

The Risk Manager should be available to give orientations to seasonal or part-time employee groups on the previously mentioned topics as well as more specific topics, at the request of supervisors or department heads. Requests for orientations should be scheduled at least two weeks in advance whenever possible.

## **SPECIFIC PROHIBITED ACTIONS**

### **1. USE OF HEADSET RADIOS AND TAPEPLAYERS BY EMPLOYEES**

As a general policy, the use of personal headset radios or tape players by employees should not be permitted on the job for the following reasons:

- a. Headset units provide mental distraction from the concentration required to perform most jobs.
- b. The ability to hear ambient sounds, including abnormal rattling and equipment noise is affected. Verbal communication from other employees is impaired as well.
- c. Hanging wires leading from the unit's receiver to the headset can prove dangerous when near machinery.
- d. Units are dangerous for bicycle riders because they can easily muffle traffic noises. Accordingly, City employees operating motor vehicles and machinery should exercise extreme caution when driving behind bicycle riders wearing headsets.

## **2. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**

- a. Under no circumstances shall an employee report to work at the beginning of a shift, or after lunch or coffee break, under the influence of alcoholic beverages; nor shall any alcoholic beverages be consumed during working hours or carried open or closed in any City vehicle. Failure to observe this rule will result in immediate suspension and/or dismissal.
- b. Any employee suspected of being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage will be immediately transported to the Police Department to take a breathalyzer test.
- c. When so ordered by the Supervisor or Department Head, this is a lawful order and the employee must obey or be subject to disciplinary action for insubordination. If the test reveals the presence of alcohol, the employee will be sent home for the remainder of the day without pay. A due-cause hearing will then be held to determine what further action should be taken.
- d. If the employee is found to be free of alcohol and is able to return to work there will be no penalty or prejudice.

## **3. DRUG ABUSE**

The use of non-prescribed drugs or the abuse of prescribed drugs by employees while on the job, where the taking of same could impair their judgment as determined by their supervisor, will require the following actions:

- a. The employee will be taken to an authorized doctor to determine the degree of impairment. If found to be impaired, the employee will be sent home for the remainder of the day.
- b. When it is determined that the employee has taken a non-prescribed drug or an illegal drug, or has abused a prescribed drug, a due-cause hearing will be held to determine what further disciplinary action will be taken.

## **INSPECTIONS**

The need for effective inspections to keep management informed regarding problems that could adversely affect the operations of the City of Middletown has never been greater. Inspections continue to be the best way to detect and control potentially harmful incidents before losses occur that could involve people, equipment, materials or the environment.

The objectives of an inspection program include:

- \* Maintaining a safe working environment through hazard recognition and removal.
- \* Determining that employees are behaving and working in a safe manner.
- \* Determining that City of Middletown operations meet or exceed acceptable safety standards.

A safety inspection program should answer the following questions:

- \* What items are to be inspected?
- \* What aspects of each item need to be examined?
- \* What conditions need to be inspected?
- \* How often must items be inspected?
- \* Who will conduct the inspection?

Prompt correction of substandard or hazardous conditions detected in an inspection demonstrates to everyone that management is seriously concerned with accident prevention.

## **ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION**

Accident investigation is a necessary and effective technique for the prevention of recurring or future accidents. If anything positive results from an accident, it is the opportunity to determine the causes and how to eliminate them.

It is essential, as a basis for a good accident investigation program, that all accidents be reported. The "near-accident" is significant because it represents a warning that something is wrong. If causes are removed, serious accidents can be prevented. Immediate action regarding all accidents and incidents can prevent



future mishaps.

The immediate supervisor should make the initial investigation using the Supervisor's Report as the supervisor most probably will be the first person in authority at the scene. In addition, the supervisor should know more about the workings of his division and the details of the job the employee was involved in at the time of the accident than anyone else in the organization.

The Accident Safety Committee may also conduct an investigation which may reveal additional information that the immediate supervisor might have overlooked.

The accident investigation, at a minimum, should encompass all of the following:

1. Name of the injured employee - identify the employee. It may be advisable to include badge, employee number or social security number. Indicate age and sex of employee.
2. Occupation at time of accident - what was he doing? His title or classification may or may not tell what he was doing. His department or division should be included with this information.
3. Nature and exact description of the injury - to the best of your knowledge the type of injury (cut, puncture, scrape, sprain or strain, or broken bone) and the bodypart injured (toe, hand, finger, knee, or head). Avoid medical terminology in describing injuries unless such descriptions are accurate and understandable to laymen.
4. Date and time of accident - when the accident actually occurred.
5. Job location - where did the accident occur? Be specific. Narrow it down to an address, identify the intersection, a building, a location within a building, or even a specific machine within a shop.
6. Description of accident - describe in detail. Identify the object, operation or substance most closely associated with the occurrence of the accident (ladder, hammer, lathe, or a specific chemical). State the manner in which the injured employee made contact with the object or substance - there is always an action or motion involved (fall, caught in or between, struck by or against, or splashed).

7. Unsafe acts and unsafe conditions - these will be treated together since they are both considered accident causes. An accident seldom has a single cause and it is necessary to determine unsafe acts or unsafe conditions. Carelessness alone should not be considered as the cause of an unsafe act type of accident. Carelessness is not a "cause" but rather a mental attitude created by lack of skill, knowledge, etc. Instead, determine what went wrong - did the employee deviate from prescribed procedures or methods? Why? Get all the answers.
8. Corrective action taken or proposed - if at all possible, some type of corrective action should be immediate. Once the problem is determined or identified, the correct and most economical remedy will usually be self-evident. If assistance is needed with the action or you can only recommend action, the assistance needed and your recommendation should be stated in the report.
9. Remarks, comments or sketch - this information should be included as necessary, to help describe the accident and identify problems.
10. The Supervisor's Investigation Report (Exhibit #2) should be used to provide all accident investigation information.
11. Take the names and addresses of all witnesses and those who appeared at the scene of the accident immediately after the employee was injured.

## **SAFETY TRAINING**

An efficient and effective safety and loss prevention program is based on working conditions being free of hazards and proper safe job performance. One positive action supervisors should take in accident prevention is to provide safety training to their people. The fruits of these efforts are readily visible and impact greatly on the safety and loss prevention program. It is essential that safety training be conducted efficiently in order to provide for accident prevention.

Every person who conducts safety training needs a number of qualities:

- \* Knowledge of subject
- \* Desire to instruct
- \* Friendly and cooperative attitude

- \* Leadership qualities
- \* Professional attitude and approach
- \* Exemplary behavior

Although training will not solve all problems, it will prove useful in the prevention of accidents. When developing a training program, the following should be considered:

#### Training Needs:

- \* New Employees
- \* When new equipment or processes are introduced
- \* When procedures have been revised
- \* When information must be made available
- \* When employee performance needs improvement
- \* When loss analysis reveals trends contributing to injuries

#### Program Objectives:

Training programs must be based on clearly defined objectives which state the purpose of the training, selection of training materials and a method to determine the effectiveness of the training.

The Personnel Director will coordinate training and maintain all records of safety training, however, each department has the responsibility of providing on-the-job training to each employee on the topics that will enable the employee to do his job safely and efficiently. This training shall include:

1. Orientation to departmental and overall City of Middletown safety and health rules.
2. Procedure for reporting on-the-job injuries.
3. Procedures for processing hospital/medical bills related to job-related injuries.
4. Workers' compensation claims process.

5. Requirements for use of vehicles, and

6. Reporting of unsafe conditions.

In addition, specialized training will be offered in the use of tools and equipment in order to maximize the capabilities of the equipment as well as to prolong its usable life and to prevent accidents.

All employees are expected to request instruction in those tasks or for any equipment with which they are not familiar.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Risk Manager to implement the City's Risk Management Program, as spelled out in the Risk Management Ordinance. The Ordinance, in part, states that its purpose is to minimize the financial burden incurred by the City and its taxpayers as a result of accidents resulting in loss to property and employee injuries.

It is the Risk Manager's role to coordinate, monitor and furnish services in support of this policy. These services include, but are not limited to:

- \* Identification of exposure to loss
- \* Analysis and evaluation of frequency and severity of loss
- \* Measurement of loss against industry standards
- \* Development and implementation of the most appropriate risk funding techniques
- \* Monitoring the effectiveness of the program
- \* Insurance Placement
- \* Workers' Compensation Benefits Administration
- \* Contract Insurance Requirements Review
- \* Life and Health Insurance Benefit Administration
- \* Contract safety compliance and procedures reviewed

## **FLEET SAFETY PROGRAM**

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Statistics gathered throughout the country demonstrate that the motor vehicle accident is the number one factor in occupational deaths and disabilities.

Each year costs continue to increase with respect to vehicle accidents. The direct cost of these accidents include personal injury, property damage, injuries to employees, medical expenses, lost time, and damage to the vehicle. The indirect cost of these accidents include such things as the increased cost of insurance, loss of vehicle use, vehicle replacement costs, and loss of employee productivity due to injuries. Studies have shown that the direct cost of accidents only accounts for 20% of the total cost. It is important that management be aware of the hidden, indirect costs associated with an accident.

### **II. MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT**

The safe operation of motor vehicles is the result of safety planning and action. Management involvement and commitment to a fleet safety program is important. Once a vehicle is on the road, supervision becomes limited, therefore, driver-selection becomes an important part of the fleet safety program. From the fleet safety point of view, we can control the condition of our vehicles, but the rest of the driving environment is not under our control, for example, other vehicles, other drivers, and the condition of the road. A good driver selection program can balance out the environmental factors that we cannot control.

The department should consider assigning the responsibility of the fleet safety program to one individual. This person would investigate, research and make analysis of personal injury and vehicle accident problems, and in conjunction with the Risk Manager and the Accident Review Committee develop methods of preventing accidents, as well as develop programs to create and maintain safety awareness.

The City has the responsibility to direct the safety effort by setting goals and by planning and organizing the achievement of these goals. The management fleet safety policy statement is set forth to accomplish these goals.

## **Policy Statement**

The City's policy is to insist that employees operate all vehicles owned or used on behalf of the City of Middletown in a safe and economical manner.

In order to accomplish this the following Safe Driver Practices will be followed:

- (1) All drivers will have a valid Connecticut driver's license for the vehicle operated.
- (2) All applicable Motor Vehicle Laws will be adhered to.
- (3) Seat belts should be worn at all times while either operating or riding as a passenger in the vehicle.
- (4) All vehicle or property damage accidents must be reported immediately to your supervisor.
- (5) Vehicles will be operated only when they are in safe operating condition. Continuous awareness of your vehicle's condition should be accomplished and operating defects reported to your supervisor or corrected prior to operation. Written Vehicle Condition Reports should at least be done on a weekly basis.
- (6) Each driver's privilege to operate a vehicle extends only as long as the driver operates the vehicle in a safe and efficient manner. A record of "preventable" accidents will result in removal of the driver's privilege to drive or placement into a position which does not require driving.

## **Records**

As part of its responsibility the Department of Transportation (DOT) has issued advisory standards which, as they relate to Fleet Safety, suggests that certain records are directly connected to safety.

- (A) Driver records
- (B) Accident records

(C) Maintenance and compliance records;

Drivers records should include:

1. Application for employment
2. Response from agencies and past employers on driver's records
3. Certification of traffic violations, submitted annually
4. Accident record
5. Safety awards
6. Disciplinary actions
7. Training and retaining record
8. Record of driver's road tests

Accident information records are developed to help determine the causes of accidents, as well as their solutions. They frequently serve as evidence in defending suits or supporting damage claims. Accident reports must be filed with federal and state agencies (depending on the situation) and to Workers' Compensation Agency when injuries are involved. In the latter case, an accident report must also be filed, according to OSHA requirements. Maintenance records are also a vital part of fleet safety records.

### **Driver Selection/Designation**

Even though driving is incidental to the reasons a City employee is hired, the considerations given to selecting or designating the people who will drive City vehicles is usually the first and most important factor that will affect the City's potential for accidents.

Evaluation of driver qualifications should be made through the following:

1. Employment Application: Should ask for previous accidents and motor vehicle violations for past 3 years, driver's license number; and if applicable to the job, the nature and extent of the applicant's experience in the operation of motor vehicles, including the type of equipment which the applicant operated.
2. Motor Vehicle Records (MVRs): a person's driving record is indicative of driving habits and gives you a clue as to what you can expect of them. The



importance of an MVR Program has been proven in courts. Employers have been found guilty of "negligent entrustment" and have been fined punitive damages when an employee with a poor driving record is involved in an accident that causes serious bodily injury or death. The basis of negligent entrustment would be that the employer failed to check the employee's driving record or knowingly allowed an employee with a poor driving record to drive. An employee or potential employee's motor vehicle record can be requested through the Risk Manager's Office.

## **Motor Vehicle Record Procedure**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this procedure is to initiate a minimum driving standard for the City and a progressive discipline policy for at-fault accidents, as well as the initiation of an Accident Review Committee.

### **Procedure**

All employees for whom driving is a necessary part of the job should maintain a satisfactory driving record in order to retain their position. A motor vehicle check will be made on all employees that drive or may drive a City vehicle, and annually thereafter a motor vehicle check will be made. This motor vehicle check will be done through the Risk Manager. A centralized list of authorized drivers should be maintained by departments by using the attached **City of Middletown Authorized Driver List form (Page 40)**. This list will be updated annually 60 days prior to the City's automobile policy renewal date of July 1. Also, motor vehicle records will be checked for all new hires. The minimum acceptable record would include a three year record with not more than five moving violations. A record with more than five, or any one of the following major violations, should preclude employment:

- (1) Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- (2) Reckless driving
- (3) Hit and run
- (4) Negligent homicide
- (5) Theft of a motor vehicle

Progressive discipline for at-fault accidents will be based on the following criteria:

- \* First offense; verbal warning and completion of defensive driver training and refer employee to Employee Assistance Program, if appropriate.
- \* Second offense; written warning to be part of personnel file, review of motor vehicle record and removal from driving position for two weeks. Consider additional driver training and Employee Assistance Program.
- \* Third offense; suspension or dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

### **Licenses**

All personnel shall have an appropriate Connecticut State Driver's License for the class of vehicle they are operating or may operate on the job.

Excerpts from Connecticut's Manual for Drivers of Commercial Vehicles:

"On October 26, 1986, Congress passed the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. This law requires each State to meet the same minimum standards for commercial driver licensing. The minimum standards require commercial motor vehicle drivers to get a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). You must have a CDL to drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle (CMV). A commercial motor vehicle is defined as a motor vehicle designed or used to transport passengers or property if the vehicle:

- \* Has a gross vehicle weight (GVW) rating of 26,001 or more pounds;  
or
- \* Is designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, or is designed to transport 10 or more passengers, including the driver, and is used to transport students under the age of twenty-one years to and from school; or
- \* If the vehicle is transporting hazardous materials and is required to be placarded.

### **\*\*Vehicles Exempt From CDL\*\***

- \* Vehicles used for farming
- \* Fire fighting apparatus
- \* Authorized emergency vehicles
- \* Recreational vehicles
- \* Military vehicles operated by military personnel

### **\*\*Legal Age\*\***

- \* You must be at least 18 years of age to apply for a learners permit.
- \* You must be at least 18 years of age to get a CDL.
- \* You must be at least 21 years of age to haul hazardous materials.
- \* You must be at least 21 years of age to drive interstate.

### **\*\*Physical Requirements\*\***

Before being given any knowledge tests, you will be required to certify that you meet all physical requirements necessary to operate a commercial motor vehicle representative of the class of license you wish to obtain. The State of Connecticut, Department of Motor Vehicles will provide certification statement forms for your signature.

If you intend to operate a commercial motor vehicle interstate, federal regulations require you to carry physical documentation certifying you meet all physical requirements necessary to operate such commercial motor vehicle.

### **\*\*Disqualifications\*\***

Any person who is disqualified shall not drive a commercial motor vehicle. An employer shall not knowingly allow, require, permit, or authorize any person who is disqualified to drive a commercial motor vehicle.

Disqualifying offenses include: driving a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) while under the influence of alcohol; driving a CMV while under the influence of a controlled substance; leaving the scene of an accident involving a CMV; committing a felony involving the use of a CMV; and the use of a CMV in the commission of a felony involving manufacturing, distributing, or dispensing a

controlled substance.

Excessive speeding, reckless driving and a violation of a state or local law relating to motor vehicle traffic control (other than a parking violation) arising in connection with a fatal traffic accident are also disqualifying offenses if committed while operation a CMV.

A CDL will not be issued to any person subject to disqualifications, suspension, revocation, or cancellation actions or who already has a CDL.

### **\*\*Connecticut's Laws on Driving and Alcohol\*\***

Connecticut has strict laws which prohibit the operation of any motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. These laws are extremely important to you as a commercial driver. Drunk driving is a crime for which you may be arrested and taken into custody. If you are convicted in court, you will be subject to fines and imprisonment.

In addition, if you are arrested for driving under the influence, you are subject to the law known as implied consent. Because you hold an operator's license, you are deemed to have consented to a chemical alcohol test. You will be asked by the arresting officer to submit to a blood, breath and urine test. You may refuse to submit to such test, but if you do, your operator's license will be suspended by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for not less than six (6) months. If you fail such test, your license will be suspended for not less than ninety (90) days. These suspensions are in addition to any sentences which may be imposed by the court.

### **THERE ARE OTHER NEW COMMERCIAL MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY ACT RULES WHICH AFFECT DRIVERS:**

You cannot have more than one license to operate commercial vehicles. If you break this rule, a court may fine you up to \$5,000 or put you in jail. Keep your Connecticut license and return any others to the licensing state.

You must notify your employer within 30 days of a conviction or forfeiture of bond for any traffic violation (except parking). This is true no matter what type of vehicle you were driving, commercial or passenger.

You must notify the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles within 30 days if you are convicted in any other state of any traffic violation (except parking). This is true no matter what type of vehicle you were driving.

You must notify your employer if your license is suspended, revoked, or canceled, or if you are disqualified from driving.

You must give your employer information on all driving jobs you have held for the past 10 years. You must do this when you apply for a commercial driving job.

No one can drive a Commercial Motor Vehicle after April 1, 1992 without a CDL.

(However, the Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles may require you to have a CDL before then). A court may fine you up to \$5,000 or put you in jail for breaking this rule.

All states will be connected to one computerized system to share information about CDL drivers. The Department of Motor Vehicles will check on drivers' accident records and be sure that drivers do not get more than one on CDL.

You will lose your CDL for at least one year for a first offense:

- if you drive a commercial motor vehicle (CMV) under the influence of alcohol, or a controlled substance (for example, illegal drugs)
- if you leave the scene of an accident involving a CMV you were driving
- if you used a CMV to commit a felony

If the offense occurs while you are operating a CMV that is placarded for hazardous materials, you will lose your CDL for at least 3 years. You will lose your CDL for life for a second offense. You will also lose your CDL for life if you use a CMV to commit a felony involving controlled substances.

If you drive when your blood alcohol concentration is .04 percent or more, you are driving under the influence of alcohol. You will lose your CDL for one year for your first offense. You will lose it for life for your second offense. If your

blood alcohol concentration is less than .04 percent but you have any detectable amount, you will be put out-of-service for 24 hours.

These rules will improve highway safety for you and for all highway users.

The City of Middletown, as an employer, will comply with all State of Connecticut motor vehicle regulation and will require all City of Middletown employees to comply with all State of Connecticut motor vehicle regulations as a condition of employment.

### **Driver Training**

As a minimum, all drivers should receive an initial evaluation of their defensive driving techniques by their supervisor or someone designated to perform the function. This should be accomplished by a formal documented road test. The purpose of the road test would be to help drivers recognize any poor driving habits that need improvement such as, following other vehicles too closely, failing to use turn signals, etc. Outside sources can be used to help with driver training.

Each driver should be informed of the following:

- (1) City Policies, Rules and Procedures -- Employees need to understand the City policy on MVR and preventable accident policies etc.
- (2) Accident Reporting Procedures -- Make sure each driver knows what to do and what not to do in the event of an accident. Explain the use of the Accident Report Packet which should be located in each vehicle or procedures of reporting over the phone or radio.
- (3) Maintenance Requirements -- Drivers should be informed of their responsibilities for inspecting vehicle condition and the preventive maintenance program for the City.
- (4) Safety Policy -- Emphasize and stress the importance of preventing accidents.

## **WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT**

### **WHAT TO DO:**

1. In the case of any accident, regardless of personal injury or property damage, notify the police. Do not leave the scene of an accident until the police have been notified and have granted permission to move the vehicle. It is your duty to cooperate with the police in every possible way.
2. Take all possible precautions to prevent traffic congestion at the scene of the accident. Such congestion frequently causes other accidents.
3. If you are driving a City vehicle, notify your supervisor immediately. In the case of a serious accident, you should also notify the Risk Manager immediately.
4. Report all accidents to the Risk Manager even though they may seem unimportant and you feel that you are not at fault.

### **WHAT NOT TO DO:**

1. Do not smoke about the wreckage - this creates a fire hazard if gasoline has been spilled. Do not permit the motor to run, as this increases fire hazard.
2. Do not accept responsibility or blame for the accident either at the scene of the accident or later. Remember that such admissions may be used against you in court.
3. Do not discuss the accident with anyone except the police, City representatives, or our claim representatives.
4. Do not give a signed statement or a court reporter's statement to any person other than City representatives or our insurance company representative.
5. Do not give any information to anyone regarding the limits of your liability insurance coverage or that of the City.

## **INFORMATION TO BE DEVELOPED AT THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT**

The glove box accident kit should be completed, following all accidents. In general:

1. Record the name and address of the owner, driver, and occupants of the other vehicle, their approximate ages, the vehicle license number, and the driver's license number.
2. Take the names and addresses of all witnesses, favorable or unfavorable, and those who appeared at the scene of the accident immediately after it happened.
3. Make a note of the exact position of the vehicles before and after the accident, also of the width of the highway, the length of the skid marks, and the distance from either curb to the spot where the accident occurred.
4. Check the damage to all vehicles and make a note of it for future reference. This information is not only important in case of a claim for damages, but it may be of material assistance if a criminal charge is filed against you.

## **DRIVER SUPERVISION**

All employees operating vehicles should be under appropriate supervision of their driving activities. This would involve a communication framework between the supervisor and employee. The most common means of supervising driving employees is through call-ins, radios, and check-in/check-out procedures.

Road observations of vehicles is necessary to verify that employees are adhering to established rules and policies. The supervisor should also be responsible for controlling routes to help minimize accident potentials. Attention should be given to controlling routes when adverse driving conditions exist, and maintaining proper vehicle maintenance schedules.

Each supervisor is responsible for making sure that the drivers in their department understand and comply with prescribed policies, rules and procedures. The supervisor will be a key individual for the success of the Fleet Safety Program.



## VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

The lack of proper maintenance increases the chances of having an accident due to equipment failure, also proper maintenance relates to the efficiency of your department.

A Preventive Vehicle Maintenance Program is designed to prevent unnecessary mechanical problems from arising. The following should be considered a minimum requirement for each department vehicle.

- a. A preventive maintenance service schedule should be established for each vehicle. The minimum schedule should be based on the manufacturers recommendations. Consideration should be given to establishing maintenance checklists outlining the service required at various intervals.
- b. A system of reporting and correcting defects should be established. Drivers should be instructed to observe their vehicles on a continuous basis and report defects for correction.
- c. A file should be established for each vehicle. This file should contain the service schedule, inspection and defect reports, and repair records. Without this simple documentation, there is no evidence that you are giving proper consideration to the condition of your vehicles, even though you may be doing more than what is required. Should one of your vehicles be involved in an accident due to mechanical failure, this documentation would be necessary to help defend any claims of negligent maintenance.

Also, the Fleet Manager will maintain records according to procedures he has already established. As a consideration to the Fleet Manager, the supervisor should consider the following driver responsibility as established by the American Trucking Association to help the Fleet Manager to properly maintain the vehicles.

Prior to any trip, the driver should prepare a vehicle-inspection report and submit a written vehicle-condition report at the end of his trip. The driver usually receives a copy of the vehicle-condition report prior to his pre-trip inspection. This procedure will provide additional assurance that the vehicle is in a safe

operating condition. Since the driver during his trip is the first one to notice any defect in his unit, the post-trip condition report will alert maintenance people to problems.

The Risk Manager will request from the Fleet Manager the direct costs of labor and equipment of all vehicles which result from accidents, and will also request the cost to repair certain vehicle conditions that are the direct result of improper driving techniques.

## CITY OF MIDDLETOWN AUTHORIZED DRIVER LIST

Department: \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

The purpose of investigating a vehicle accident will be to determine the cause, preventability and ways to avoid a recurrence. Determination of preventability is important as a record of "Preventable" accidents may result in removal of the City driver's privilege to drive or placement into a position which does not require driving. The National Safety Council defines preventable accidents as "any occurrence involving an owned or operated vehicle which results in property damage and/or personal injury, regardless of who was injured, what property was damaged, to what extent or where it occurred, in which the driver in question failed to do everything one reasonably could have done to prevent the occurrence." An "at fault" accident is one in which the driver is legally liable and may have been cited. A "preventable" accident is not always an "at-fault" accident.

A small committee representing the department and consisting of representation from management and experienced drivers within the department could review the accident or if the department does not have such a committee, a review of the accident can be made by the accident review committee, which is a sub-committee of the Mayor's Safety Committee. The committee will review the accident and investigation reports and may interview the involved driver to ask questions until all available evidence is in, then a determination will be made as to whether the accident was "preventable" or "non-preventable". If the accident is preventable, the committee will make a recommendation to prevent a similar accident from occurring in the future. The committee will use the "Guide to Determining Preventability of Accidents" to reach its decision. If the driver or management believes that the committee's decision was incorrect and needs further review. The Risk Management Committee consisting of department heads and the Risk Manager will review that decision and request what information it needs to make a recommendation to the Mayor. Recommendations as a result of this review will be submitted to the Mayor for review and recommendation.

### **Guide to Determining Preventability of Accidents**

Safe Driving requires careful determination of the preventability of each accident in which a City driver is involved. This determination can be made easier by developing the information, as requested in the section Information to be Developed at the Scene of the Accident. Especially important is a complete investigation by the driver's supervisor.

The first step in reviewing the accident is to determine if the City driver adhered

to the Defensive Driving Code. That is, did the driver drive in such a way that one committed no errors, and so controlled the vehicle as to make due allowance for conditions of road, weather and traffic, and to assure that mistakes of other drivers did not involve him in an accident?"

Despite the fact that each accident will be judged individually, fleet safety experience has determined that accidents under the following conditions should be considered preventable. The guidelines following may be updated periodically and may be amended as necessary.

## **1. Intersections**

- a. The City driver is responsible for approaching intersections prepared to take such action as is necessary to avoid accidents, regardless of the actions of other drivers. Failure to obey the law or to heed traffic control devices on the part of the other driver does not automatically make the accident non-preventable. The City driver's failure to take every precautionary measure prior to entering the intersection must be considered in making a decision. If a City driver fails to check the cross traffic to be sure that it is going to stop, or if he forces the right-of-way instead of yielding, then any resulting accident should be ruled preventable.
- b. Accidents involving special intersections such as alleys, driveways, etc., must be carefully reviewed to determine what action could have been taken to avoid the accident. Many of these intersections are blind and the other driver's vision is blocked; therefore, failure to slow down, sound a warning or yield the right-of-way can be considered sufficient cause to rule the accident preventable.

## **2. Changing traffic lanes**

- a. Passing is a voluntary action, and failure to pass safely indicates possible faulty judgment or a lack of consideration of all the factors affecting the maneuver. Actions of oncoming traffic or of the traffic being passed do not excuse the City driver. These actions should be anticipated and considered before starting the maneuver.
- b. Being passed requires that the City driver yield to the passing vehicle by

slowing down or moving to the right if the City driver is trapped and a sideswipe or cut-off is imminent.

- c. Lane encroachment accidents on the highway or in merging traffic indicates an unwillingness to yield to vehicles or to wait for a safe break in traffic. Blind spots are not a valid excuse. The City driver should use extra caution to allow for the areas of limited vision.
- d. "Squeeze plays" involving fixed objects or other vehicles can be avoided by dropping back when it is apparent the other driver is forcing the issue or contesting a common portion of the road.
- e. Pulling away from a parked position is actually a change of traffic lane; and, as such, the burden of responsibility is on the driver pulling out. An accident resulting from a driver's pulling out from the curb should be judged preventable.

Failure to observe any of these defensive driving techniques should result in the accident being ruled preventable.

### **3. Front-end and rear-end collisions**

- a. The city driver can prevent front-end collisions by maintaining a safe following distance at all times. "Tail-gating" is one of the most frequent causes of accidents and can never be excused. Regardless of abrupt, unexpected stops or actions of the driver ahead, a driver must be able to stop safely. Paying more attention to the road ahead of the driver being followed will help to anticipate his actions. Night speed should be adjusted so that the stopping distance is not greater than the forward distance illuminated by the headlights.
- b. City drivers risk being struck from behind by failing to maintain a safe following distance. Failure to signal intentions or failure to slow down gradually for traffic signals or grade crossings, thus trapping the following driver, should be cause for ruling the accident preventable.
- c. Rolling back into a vehicle is the result of not keeping the vehicle under control and is considered preventable.

#### **4. Backing**

It is extremely rare that a backing accident is ruled not preventable. Even when being guided, the driver is not relieved of his responsibility to back safely. The guide is just an aid and cannot control the movement of the vehicle. The driver must check clearances for himself.

#### **5. Turns**

- a. Any time a City driver leaves a traffic lane, the complete responsibility for the maneuver is his. Signaling is not enough; traffic on both sides and to the rear must be checked carefully before making a change. "Squeeze plays" caused by left or right turns are the responsibility of the driver making the turn. Failure to signal, signaling too late, failure to check mirrors before and during the turn or to take any other necessary defensive action must be considered by the accident review committee.
- b. Accidents involving turns by other drivers should be investigated and examined in detail. The non-turning driver may have failed to recognize that a turn was pending from the actions of the other vehicle and thus failed to take proper defensive action, or he may have tried to force the right-of-way. Any such lack of defensive driving should cause the accident to be considered preventable.
- c. Any accident involving a U-turn on the part of a driver should be ruled preventable.

#### **6. Vehicles going in opposite directions**

The head-on or sideswipe accident involving vehicles going in opposite directions is one of the most difficult to classify. The exact actions of each vehicle prior to the accident must be determined, in order to ascertain whether the City driver should have been warned of a possible involvement by the actions and maneuvers of the opposing vehicles.

If the opposing vehicle was passing and thus intruding into the City driver's lane and the City driver failed to slow down, stop or pull to the right, then he failed to take proper defensive measures and the resulting accident should

be judged preventable. Failure to warn the other driver by horn or flicking headlights also should be considered.

## **7. Mechanical failure**

- a. A City driver should inspect his equipment before starting a trip and report unsafe conditions. Immediate repairs should be obtained if continued operation could cause an accident. If an accident is caused by mechanical failure that reasonably could have been detected by the City driver, the accident should be judged preventable. If a mechanical defect occurs or develops during a trip, the City driver should notify the supervisor. If the trip is continued without such notification and an accident results, then it should be judged preventable.
- b. Abusive driving that creates abnormal strain and leads to mechanical failure resulting in an accident is also preventable.

## **8. Weather**

Rain, fog, snow, ice and sleet do not, in themselves, cause accidents. They are the environment to which the City driver must adjust. Failure to adjust driving to the existing conditions properly or failure to postpone driving when conditions are really bad may be grounds for deciding the accident was preventable. Failure to use equipment, such as chains provided by the City should be considered as failure to adjust to conditions; and any resulting accident should be ruled preventable.

## **9. Fixed objects**

- a. Collision with fixed objects such as low overheads, buildings, poles, parked cars, etc., must be considered as preventable accidents. Asking a bystander's opinion on clearance does not relieve the City driver of his responsibility. Resurfaced pavement causing low overhead and other changes in conditions along a route are not valid excuses.
- b. Driving on private property, at construction sites or on driveways not



designed to support heavy trucks create special problems. It is the City driver's responsibility to discuss the operation with the proper authorities and to obtain permission prior to entering the area. If the driveway is too weak or too narrow (if, for instance, wheels may damage the lawn), the City driver should get permission from his supervisor before entering. Failure to do so should deem the accident preventable.

#### **10. Pedestrians, bicycles, motor scooters**

- a. Pedestrians are generally considered to have the right-of-way over vehicles even though their actions may be unorthodox. Shopping areas, school zones, play areas and areas of congested pedestrian traffic require reduced speeds -- in many cases, much below the posted limits. An accident caused by "going too fast for conditions" should be ruled preventable.
- b. Bicycles, motor scooters, etc., frequently perform sudden, unexpected maneuvers. A City driver who fails to reduce speed, pull over, or otherwise take precautions when this type of equipment is near, has failed to take proper defensive driving measures; and the accident is preventable.

#### **11. Parked Vehicles**

- a. Even though a City driver's vehicle is stationary, an accident can be ruled preventable. Unconventional parking locations, crooked parking, double parking, failure to put out warning devices, etc., may generally be considered a lack of defensive driving and thus cause the accident to be ruled preventable.
- b. Roll-aways of a parked vehicle in almost all cases should be ruled preventable. Failure to block the wheels properly, not turning wheels against the curb, or failure to take any other precaution to avoid vehicle movement, are lack of defensive driving techniques. Therefore, any accident resulting from such failure should be ruled preventable.

- c. Failure to lock an unattended vehicle properly, thus permitting unauthorized entry, should be grounds for ruling a resulting roll-away preventable.

## **12. Non-collision**

- a. Jack-knifing, over-turning, or running off the road are generally the result of emergency action taken to avoid collision. The driving immediately preceding the accident should be examined to determine whether the City driver's speed was unsafe for conditions, or if one was "tail-gating" or committing someother unsafe act that did not permit him to keep the vehicle under control. Committing any of these errors would make such an accident preventable.
- b. Dropping an improperly secured trailer when pulling out should be judged preventable if the occurrence could have been foreseen by the City driver during one's pre-trip inspection.
- c. Passenger accidents where there is no collision involved must be considered preventable if they are caused by faulty driving. Passenger injuries caused by evasive action to avoid a collision must be judged preventable if the City driver failed to use defensive driving techniques which would have eliminated the need for sudden or violent action.
- d. Damage to property or persons from projecting loads, losing part of a load, parts of the vehicle being loose (chains, doors) are preventable if the driver failed to secure them properly or if detected during pre-trip inspection and the City driver does not have them secured.
- e. Load damage due to violent maneuvers to avoid collision should be judged preventable if defensive driving would have eliminated the need for violent action. Damage caused by sudden starts, stops, fast turns, speeding over bumpy roads, must be considered as a failure to adjust to conditions, and should be judged preventable.

## **13. Violations of law or City policy**

If a violation of the law or of City policy on the part of the City driver contributes to or causes an accident, then it must be judged preventable.

#### **14. Accident situations not described**

For any accident not described, the accident review committee should use this reasoning: If there is any defensive driving technique, or change in driving habits that could have prevented the accident then, using the National Safety Council definition of a preventable accident, the accident must be ruled preventable.

#### **USE OF PERSONAL VEHICLES**

On occasion, employees may be authorized to use their personal vehicles on City business. Since City financial resources could be at risk in such situations, the department head should require the employee to provide a copy of their insurance policy declarations page and obtain a copy of employee's driver's license and provide this information to the Risk Manager so that a MVR check can be made and the results provided to the department head.

#### **SEAT BELTS**

It is mandatory for all employees to wear seat belts while driving or occupying a motor vehicle on business.

#### **ASSIGNMENT AND USE OF VEHICLES**

All City vehicles should be assigned to one (1) individual only, when possible. This increases control over vehicle use, allows for better maintenance and establishes clear accountability for the vehicle.

#### **DRIVING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

All drivers of City vehicles, and those using their personal vehicle in pursuit of City business will comply with all applicable laws of the State of Connecticut as well as the City's Safety Fleet Program and any additional regulations of the City. Emergency vehicles under pressing emergency situations are exempted from usual motor vehicle laws and rules, but are required to exercise due caution and care in travel.

## **PARKING**

1. City vehicles are not to park in "NO PARKING" zones except in emergency situations or in required performance of official duties. At those times a vehicle is parked in a "NO PARKING" zone, emergency blinkers will be turned on.
2. No City vehicles are to be left unattended with ignition key left in the ignition.
3. Before initial use of any vehicle each day, the driver will walk around and inspect the vehicle for damage, inoperable lights, loose hardware, underinflated tire, or any other conditions which may create an unsafe situation.
4. Any deficiency encountered will be reported to the supervisor immediately. It will be the supervisor's responsibility to insure that appropriate action is taken to correct the problem.

## **EQUIPMENT**

1. Safety belts will be worn at all times by all drivers.
2. Turn signals will be utilized by all drivers at all times in ample time to warn oncoming or following vehicles of the intent.
3. Drivers will insure that windows, headlights, taillights and windshield wipers are clean and operational at all times.
4. Tailgates should be up and locked when vehicles so equipped are in motion.
5. In any case, the driver of the vehicle is responsible to see that all necessary conditions are met on the vehicle before the driver operates it.
6. If the vehicle does not have a tailgate, but is loaded, the driver of the vehicle will insure that the load is secure on the truck and that overhangs are properly marked in accordance with applicable state and local laws.

## SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

1. Special equipment such as tractors, graders, plows, or any unit which has special devices added for specific types of work will require formal instruction prior to use by a driver. This special training will include the following:
  - a. Explanation and demonstration of all control devices.
  - b. Explanation and demonstration of all safety equipment.
  - c. Knowledge of maintenance items such as fuel, water, oil or other minimum operating needs of the unit.
  - d. Demonstration of operation.
  - e. New driver operation under supervision with testing.
  - f. Instruction in driving to and from, or on and off a trailer, parking procedures and method for securing. A report of this training is to be on file in the department with a copy provided to Personnel and the Risk Manager.
2. Passengers will ride only in areas designed for passengers on special equipment.
3. Operators will always look around and have a person guiding them when backing. (Guide required for in-street work).
4. Construction-type equipment will use the right lane except when a turn is required. Right-of-way will be given to all other motor vehicles. Headlights will be on at all times when driving down the street. Triangular, orange-colored slow moving vehicle signs should be displayed in the rear of the vehicle.
5. Use of special equipment without training on record and authorization listed on the Driver Authorization List will result in disciplinary action.

## GENERAL

1. Backing up vehicles without a clear view of the area back of the rear end will be done only with the assistance of a guide. If a second person is in the vehicle, he will get out and guide the vehicle back using the appropriate hand signal and voice signal. If the driver is alone, the driver will get out of the vehicle and inspect the area behind before backing. Again, strict caution is to be observed.
2. Riding on the sides, tool boxes, tailgates or roof of any truck is prohibited. Further, standing in the back of any truck is not permitted. Riders will be only in the intended area.
3. Drivers will carry their Connecticut drivers' license at all times when operating motor vehicles. Suspension or loss of driving privileges will result in full-time drivers being temporarily reclassified until such time, as their driving privileges are reinstated or a temporary restricted permit is issued.
4. Each employee who operates a vehicle regularly or occasionally is required to report any suspension or revocation of their license to their supervisor, who will in turn advise the department head and the Risk Manager of this fact. Failure of an employee to report a change in license status will result in disciplinary action.
5. Except in authorized emergencies, posted speed limits will be strictly adhered to.
6. During periods of limited visibility or any time windshield wipers are in use, vehicle headlights will be turned on.
7. All drivers should receive periodic review of their in-car driving ability. Also, periodic training exercises should be run in special driving skills.
8. Consumption of alcoholic beverages or narcotics immediately prior to operation of a vehicle is strictly prohibited.
9. Trailers are to be fastened securely to hitches. Safety pins in pintel locks

will be used. Safety chains will be crossed under the hitch and securely fastened before moving the vehicle.

10. All items to be transported either in a truck or trailer, which may move around during transport, will be secured.
11. No more than three (3) persons will ride in the front seat of any vehicle. Where only two single seats exist, there is to be only one rider per seat.

These rules may be updated periodically and may be amended as necessary.